is a half cupola at the east, and a great cupola of 110 feet diameter in the middle of the crossing of the great aisles. In this the surveyor has imitated the Pantheon or Rotonda in Rome. . . . The Pantheon is no higher within than its diameter: St. Peter's is two diameters. This shows too high, the other too low. The surveyor at St. Paul's took a mean proportion, *i.e.* 1·414 : 1, which shows its concave every way, and is very lightsome by the windows of the upper order, which strike down the light through the great colonnade that encircles the dome without, and serves for the butment of the dome, which is brick, of two bricks thick, but as it rises every 5 feet, has a course of very excellent brick of 18 inches long, banded through the whole thickness. The concave was turned upon a centre, which was judged necessary to keep the work even and true, though a cupola might be built without a centre; but this is observable, that the centre was laid without any standards from below to support it, and as it was both centering and scaffolding it remained for the use of the painter. Every story of this scaffolding being circular, and the ends of all the ledgers meeting as so many rings, and truly wrought, it supported itself. This machine was an original of the kind, and will be a useful project for the like work hereafter. . . . . It was necessary to give a greater height than the cupola would gracefully allow within, though it is considerably above the roof of the church. Yet the old church having had before a very lofty spire of timber and lead, the world expected that the new should not in this respect fall short of the old (though that was but a *spit* and this a *mountain*); he was therefore obliged to comply with the humour of the age, and to raise another structure over the first cupola, and this was a cone of brick—so built as to support a stone lantern of an elegant figure, and ending in ornaments of copper gilt; the cone being covered and hid out of sight with another cupola of oak timber and lead, and between this and the cone are easy stairs that ascend to the lantern.

"He took no care to make little lathern windows in the leaden cupola, as are done out of St. Peter's, because he had otherwise provided for light enough for the stairs from the lantern above and round the pedestal of the same, which are not seen below. So he only ribbed the outward cupola, which he thought less Gothic than to stick it full of such little lights in three stories one above the other (as is executed in the cupola of St. Peter's at Rome), which could not without difficulty be mended, and, if neglected, would damage the timbers. The inside of the whole cupola is painted and richly decorated by an eminent English artist, Sir James Thornhill, containing, in eight compartments, the Histories of St. Paul. In the crown of the vault, as in the Pantheon, is a circular opening, by which not only the lantern transmits light, but the inside ornaments of the painted and gilded cone display a new and agreeable scene."* We have here engravings of these pictures,—St. Paul at Athens, at Ephesus, before Felix, and at Malta; the conversion of St. Paul; St. Paul and Elymas the soothsayer, and St. Paul at Lystra and Phillippi; all of which are admirably executed.

"The first stone was laid in the year 1675. The walls of the choir and side aisles were finished 1685. The highest stone on the top lantern was laid in 1710, by the hands of Christopher Wren, the son of the surveyor, by him deputed so to do, Sir Christopher being in his 79th year."—So much for the extracts from the Parentalia.

It is well known that Wren was averse to a balustrade above the main cornice, and in Elmes' "Life of Wren" there is an amusing letter from him, deprecating the introduction: it is dated October, 1717, just before his dismissal, which occurred in 1718. In certain points of view, as from some of the narrow streets adjoining, the pierced work of the balustrade has a happy effect; but Wren always looked at St. Paul's as a work that might be seen from suitable points of view, and the cornice with the magnificent line of trusses which he provided for its support required no balustrade.

The church was carried on with every attempt to make it as rich and perfect as the funds would possibly allow, in the time of the Stuarts. At the accession of William III. both he and Queen Mary were well disposed to carry on the building; but they seemed to have wished to get over it quickly: they did not, like the Stuarts, treat it as a work of love, but as a piece of business. Still they were great friends to Wren; and the queen, herself a Stuart, was his great patron after the deposition of James II. After her death, in 1695, his enemies began to get the better of him; and in 1696, in an Act of the 9th William III. "for completing and adorning the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London," a clause was inserted to suspend a moiety of the surveyor's salary till the church should be finished, "thereby the better to encourage him to finish it." When we consider that his salary was only 200*l.* a year, and that he received no other advantage besides that, we see that he was rather in bad case towards the end of William's reign. The king was not inimical to Wren, and seems to have been pleased with what he did at Hampton Court, but he was immersed in politics to an extent beyond that which other kings have been before or since. In Queen Anne's reign the church was still carried on, but more or less with the same wish to get it over, and to that fact we may ascribe what is said in the Parentalia as to the mosaics. These Wren certainly intended, and they were no doubt practicable. In Queen Anne's reign, however, Sir James Thornhill obtained the commission to decorate the church, and there can be little doubt, from these prints (and from the model), that Wren intended a coffered ceiling, and generally, a thoroughly architectural design. There is still a good deal of architectural device in the present cupola, and we cannot much blame that. So that, for the first years of Sir James Thornhill's commission (till about the year 1712), they must have worked pretty well together; but afterwards (if any faith be placed in the print by Wales and Gwyn) the paintings were sprawled about over the architecture, much as they are in the late Borrominesque churches. Therefore, it must be supposed that as Wren's bold relaxed, Thornhill's became firmer, and the painter got the start of the architect; so that it is in some degree fortunate that these lower parts of Thornhill's design were not executed. They would have interfered with the architectural character of the building; but if we can eliminate from them the ideas of Wren, we may do much to form a consistent scheme of decoration. In a print, engraved by Wren's permission and authority, figures are shown in the spandrels of the dome, somewhat as in the pendentives of St. Peter's, but much smaller: in the small cupolas of the nave there are coffers, with figures in the spandrels, in due subordination to the architecture.

Worse days came for Wren:—

"Old times were changed, old manners gone:
A stranger filled the Stuart's throne:
The bigots of the iron time
Had held his harmless art a crime."

And by the accession of George I. all the old intention of carrying on the building as it should be was entirely lost sight of.

Here is a passage, in which Wren complains of the painting being taken out of his hands. He had applied for the moiety of his salary, but was told the building was not done. He replies:—"Nothing can be said to be unperfected but the iron fence round the church, and painting the cupola, the directing of which has been taken out of my hands; and therefore I hope I am neither answerable for them, nor that the said suspending clause can, or ought to, affect me any further on that account." This was undoubtedly very different treatment to that which such a man deserved. Moreover, as we have said, the surveyor's salary was only 200*l.* per annum!

The puritanic zeal of the time seems to have entirely put a stop to the decoration of the church; and the same feeling was strongly developed in the case of the window of St. Margaret's Church, which was objected to as superstitious, although it is simply a very beautiful picture of the Crucifixion. That discussion led to the production of an exceedingly able publication, by Dr. Wilson, which was published in 1761. I will read a few extracts from that work, which I think furnish an excellent apology for the introduction of historical figures into St. Paul's, or any other church; of course, always observing that nothing should be introduced which could in any way offend persons who might conscientiously take offence. Dr. Wilson says:—

"It is impossible for any one who has made the least observation on mankind not to have discovered the vast influence which grandeur and magnificence have on our minds. The splendour of the palace begets the most respectful ideas of the prince who inhabits it; and the courts of justice would lose a great share of their dignity were the judges divested of their robes.

It may perhaps be said that objects of this nature affect only the vulgar, whilst men of sense look farther, and bestow their reverence on those real and internal qualities which alone deserve it. If this be true, it is, I believe, certain that all mankind are the vulgar in this respect, since there does not, probably, a human creature exist who is not in some degree influenced by appearances. . . And contempt is the concomitant of meanness—and reverence of splendour.

I have sometimes thought that men may have considered this as a kind of mechanical method of exciting devotion, and have, perhaps, objected to it as if it derogated from the dignity of true religion. It would, in my opinion, be equally reasonable to object to the use of a lever, because the application of it was a restraint to our natural strength.

It was undoubtedly with the religious hope of doing something acceptable to God that men were led to adorn his temples, and not from any reflections, *à priori*, that ornaments were capable of raising devotion. But since experience convinces us that this is true, we have now an additional motive for embellishing the structure in which we pay our adoration to the God of all."

With regard to the subjects that may be proposed for decorations of churches, he cites the following highly important passage from Archbishop Wake (then reputed of the Low Church party), in his "Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England:"—"When the pictures of God the Father and of the Holy Ghost,—so directly contrary to the Second Commandment, and to St. Paul's doctrine,—shall be taken away, and those of our Saviour and the blessed saints be by all necessary cautions rendered truly the books, and not the snares, of the ignorant, then will we respect the images of our Saviour and of the blessed Virgin. And as some of us now bow down towards the altar, and all of us are enjoined to do so at the name of our Lord Jesus, so will we not fail to testify all due respect to his representation."

Further on the author says:—"As ornament and instruction are all we contend for, I should prefer large historical paintings to single figures; and this the more readily, because adoration has at no time nor in any place been paid to them. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to conceive, when a number of objects are placed before the eye in one picture, that a particular one can be selected for this purpose; and yet it must be done, unless we can suppose men be ridiculous enough to adore the thieves that were crucified with our Saviour and the guards who attended." He then considers whether the rules of the Church of England were contrary to painting, and shows that they are not so.

Now, we find in St. Paul's some magnificent spaces adapted for paintings. The various cupolas of the nave and aisles, the spandrels of the roof, and part of the drum of the dome, are all open to the painter; and if so decorated, of course under due restrictions, and in accordance with the Protestant authorities of those times, I think the church of St. Paul's might be made worthy of its position, as the head church of this country. But before that is

* "The judgment of the surveyor was originally, instead of painting in the manner it is now performed, to have beautified the inside of the cupola with the more durable ornament of mosaic work, as is nobly executed in the cupola of St. Peter's at Rome. For this purpose he had purposed to have procured from Italy four of the most eminent artists in that profession; but as this art was a great novelty in England, and not generally apprehended, did not receive the encouragement it deserved. It was imagined, also, the expense would prove too great, and the time very long in the execution; but though these, and all objections, were fully answered, yet this excellent design was no longer pursued. The painting and gilding of the architecture of the east end of the church, over the communion table, was intended only to serve the present occasion, till such time as material could have been procured for a magnificent design of an altar, consisting of four pillars wreathed of the richest Greek marbles, supporting a canopy, half-spherical, with proper decorations of architecture and sculpture, for which the respective drawings and a model were prepared. Information and particular descriptions of certain blocks of marble were once sent to the Right Rev. Dr. Compton, Bishop of London, from a Levantine merchant in Holland, and communicated to the surveyor; but unluckily the colours and markings did not answer his purpose. So it rested in expectance of a fitter opportunity, else probably this curious and stately design had been finished at the same time with the main fabric."

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